

## Financial Officer

It takes money to deliver all the programs that the Ministry of Natural Resources administers, just as in any other organization. Because the Ministry is funded by taxpayers, controlling expenditures is a very important job.

As an entry level Financial Officer you are responsible for ensuring a smooth and responsible cash flow in the region. You co-ordinate the preparation of workplans requesting funding at the beginning of every fiscal year. At different points throughout the year, you review spending and work progress to ensure that both remain on target. You advise managers on the best way to budget expenditures and may develop training courses on financial management for Ministry staff.

As you progress in your career, more and more of your time is involved in interpreting and recommending financial policies and procedures. You will analyse problems in the system, develop solutions and ways to implement new policies from the central government agencies. In short, you ensure that the ministry remains financially on track.

While you don't need to be a mathematical genius to enjoy this work, you do need to have a logical, analytical mind and like solving problems on your own. It is also important to be able to communicate well, both orally and in writing, so that you can explain technical information to nonprofessionals. The ministry's financial information is increasingly stored by computers so it will help if you have a general understanding of computerized accounting. One way to gain the accounting knowledge and experience necessary to enter this career is to study for your recognised accounting designation (C.G.A., R.I.A., or C.A.) while you work as an accounting clerk.

## Public Relations Officer

Most of the people who work for the ministry carry out their duties within only one of the various branches of this organization. The Public Relations Officer, however, is expected to have a complete knowledge of what the total ministry is all about. You should possess the skills to learn what the public wants this ministry to do, and to tell them what we can do.

The people we deal with are diverse – both in their needs and their geographic location.

The ministry's programs range from enforcing legislation to providing information and advice on recreational opportunities. The Public Relations Officers must be able to design a system to respond to this wide range of needs for information. One must also be able to determine the most effective technique to satisfy these needs. A knowledge of mass media is important since daily liaison with newspapers, magazines, radio and television may be necessary. How to develop audio-visual programs, organize news conferences, write and design publications, deliver speeches, and design displays are also important and needed skills.

Another important group that needs to be kept informed is the other ministry staff you work with. As mentioned above, most staff work within a narrow range of the diverse programs in this ministry. Consequently, they must be kept informed on what has been, is, and will be going on throughout the entire organization.

Normal prerequisites for this type of position usually include formal training in the communications field at the college or university level and several years experience in the media or in public relations.

## Regional Administration Co-ordinator

Money is required to fund projects, buy equipment and pay wages. Accompanying the spending of money are administrative procedures that ensure budgets are set up and the funds are spent properly.

Your role as Administration Co-ordinator is to make certain that the financial aspects of your region follow established guidelines. You see that the concerns of your region are considered when new policies and procedures are developed. You are a member of a number of committees that provide this information to your district managers.

This ministry has developed a new budgeting system and it is part of your job to make sure that the system is carried out properly in your area. The Regional Director will want to be kept informed of its success.

Each district in your region has an Administration Supervisor that reports to you on financial and administration matters. Normally a formal education in business administration or accounting aids you in keeping these supervisors up-to-date on the latest finance and administration procedures.

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## Administrative Services

### Job Profiles



## Introduction To Ministry of Natural Resources Administrative Services

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources welcomes both women and men to the administrative services as a valuable part of the ministry team.

This ministry is faced with the challenge of providing a wide variety of services for the people of Ontario. Among other responsibilities, we create opportunities for outdoor recreation and manage the province's natural resources. We have met the challenge. Our major task is to continue to keep our programs running smoothly and efficiently. That means organization – a role left to the hands of our Administrative Services personnel.

Wages have to be paid and records have to be kept. The ministry's programs would collapse without co-ordination from a decision-making centre. There are a number of administrative functions which are needed to keep the ministry operating smoothly. Fulfilling these functions is a big job.

### Purchasing Officer

No operation can function without the necessary supplies and equipment. Many services not supplied by ministry staff are needed. A Purchasing Officer in the ministry is responsible for buying these goods and services at the best possible price.

As a Purchasing Officer you receive requests from all branches for goods and services. You can then select the buyer for the purchase in a variety of ways, depending on the item. For example, purchasing larger pieces of equipment involves sending out specifications and tenders to suppliers who forward their cost of supplying the equipment. The lowest tender is usually chosen.

To do this job, you must enjoy dealing with people and be able to communicate with them easily and pleasantly, remembering always that you are a representative of the government. In order to gain the technical skills needed to do this job, a purchasing program at a community college which leads to registration as a professional purchaser in the Purchasing Management Association of Canada is recommended.

### Personnel Officer

Everyone who works with the ministry will be assisted by a Personnel Officer at one time or another. That time may come on your first day on the job.

As a Personnel Officer, you work with the supervisory staff in selecting people for vacant positions, determine salary levels for different jobs, help set up training programs and assist in solving employees' work performance problems.

Your role is primarily that of an advisor rather than a decision-maker. As such, you provide information on employee benefits and counselling on career opportunities, not to mention personal and work-related problems. Being a good listener is essential.

To be qualified, you must be a good communicator. You should be well acquainted with the Ontario Public Service Act, the Collective Agreement, and the Manual of Administration. Formal training in behavioral science or administration and on-the-job training may assist you in attaining a position as a Personnel Officer. Above all, experience in the personnel administration field is necessary.

Your role in our organization is to help the ministry achieve its goals through the most effective possible use of the human resources at its disposal.

### Systems Officer

Today we can obtain all sorts of information from computers without having expert knowledge of them. Ministry offices across the province have computers designed to give information to their staff quickly and easily.

For instance, foresters need to know locations of different species of trees, their age, health and where new planting should be undertaken; the Fire Management Centre needs to know weather conditions and forecasts during a fire and the progress of fire suppression; Conservation Authorities need to know the levels of lakes and rivers during spring thaw in order to predict flood conditions and take emergency measures; and the Payroll Department needs a constantly updated list of staff, job classifications and salaries. But these are just a few examples. A Systems Officer designs these systems making it easier for employees to obtain and use the information.

When you first enter this career field, you develop codes for program specifications given to you by your manager, and test programs to see if they work. As you become more experienced, you learn how to design a whole system. You meet with clients to discuss what they need, analyse this information, convert it into a design and develop a program. You install the system for the client, write clear instructions to enable the client to use it and then you are responsible for solving any problems that occur in the system.

In order to be successful in this type of job, you need to have an analytical mind and enjoy solving problems. It is also an advantage to be able to communicate well, both orally and in writing, for precise and clear communication with clients. A certificate or a degree in Computer Science from a Technical Institute or College is recommended to give you the necessary technical background for this job.

### Safety Officer

Administering programs over the whole province, on water and land, in all kinds of weather, in all seasons of the year and with a wide variety of equipment and machines exposes employees of this ministry to many safety hazards. We also operate facilities across the province that attract thousands of people, whether it be for an hour tour or for a three week vacation. Although some accidents are inevitable, the emphasis must be placed on safety.

We want to make sure the work we do and visits to any of our facilities by the public are accident-free. If there is an accident, we must know how to react to prevent the situation from getting worse.

It is the Safety Officer's job to design and implement safety programs. You organize and conduct training sessions in the safe operation and maintenance of cars, trucks, boats, chainsaws and snowmobiles, defensive driving and in first aid. You will carry out safety inspections of work areas, equipment buildings and make recommendations to correct any hazardous conditions that you find.

Of course, you cannot prevent all accidents. So when an accident does occur, you will be the one who investigates it to find out the cause and figure out how to prevent its recurrence. As well, by studying accident and injury reports, you may be able to identify recurring problems that can be corrected.

In order to do this job well, you need a general knowledge of ministry operations, good verbal and writing skills, better than average public speaking skills and instructor-level training in various safety skills.